

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: US PRESS SUMMARY

1. FOLLOWING IS CONTINUATION OF HERSH NYTIMES ARTICLE OF DECEMBER 9 AND 10. FIRST PART OF DECEMBER 9 ARTICLE SENT BY WHITE HOUSE DECEMBER 9.

2. NYTIMES, DECEMBER 9, HERSH (CONTINUATION) REPORTS

THE ALKS WITH CHINA EVENTUALLY LED TO MR. KISSINGER'S SECRET TRIP TO THAT COUNTRY BY WAY OF PAKISTAN IN JULY 1971, AND THE RAPPROCHEMENT WITH THAT COUNTRY. THE SOVIET TALKS WERE NEGOTIATIONS OVER STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION CONDUCTED PERSONALLY BY MR. KISSINGER AND ANATOLY F. DOBRYNIN, THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES. IN ADDITION MR. NIXON WAS CORRESPONDING SECRETLY WITH PREMIER ALEKSEI N. KOSYGIN AT THE TIME OF THE PENTAGON PAPERS DISCLOSURE.

DETAILS OF THE PRIVATE NEGOTIATIONS ON ARMS LIMITATION WERE NOT SUPPLIED TO THE OFFICIAL UNITED STATES NEGOTIATING TEAM, HEADED BY GERALD C. SMITH WHICH WAS ENGAGED UNCLASSIFIED

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IN FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN VIENNA AND HELSINKI. SUCH UNUSUAL SECRECY WAS TYPICAL FOR MR. KISSINGER, WHO WAS ALSO MEETING SECRETLY WITH LE DUC THO, THE CHIEF NORTH VIETNAMESE PEACE NEGOTIATOR, IN PARIS

DURING 1971.

WHEN THE PENTAGON PAPERS WERE PUBLISHED, THE SOURCES SAID PRESIDENT NIXON WAS EXTREMELY DISTRESSED BUT NO MORE SO THAN HIS CHIEF FOREIGN ADVISER. "HENRY WAS LITERALLY CLIMBING THE WALLS," ONE WHITE HOUSE INSIDER SAID.

IN THE DAYS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING, MR. KISSINGER WAS TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN ASSESSING THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE LEAK AND THE POTENTIAL DAMAGE DR. ELLSBERG COULD CREATE IF HE DISCLOSED FURTHER INFORMATION.

COMPLICATING MR. KISSINGER'S ANGER WAS A TOUCH OF EMBARRASSMENT HIS WHITE HOUSE COLLEAGUES THOUGHT; FOR DR. ELLSBERG HAD LECTURED AT MR. KISSINGER'S DEFENSE POLICY SEMINARS AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY IN THE NINETEEN-SIXTIES, AND THE MEN HAD WORKED TOGETHER ON THE VIETNAM PROBLEM IN THE SAME YEARS.

IN ADDITION, DR. ELLSBERG HAD WORKED FOR SEVERAL WEEKS HELPING MR. KISSINGER PUT TOGETHER HIS VIETNAM OPTION PAPERS THAT WERE PREPARED IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION.

THE OPTION PAPERS ASSESSED THE MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC SITUATION IN SOUTH AND NORTH VIETNAM AS OF LATE 1968 AND ATTEMPTED TO PREDICT THE RESULTS OF INITIATIVES SUCH AS A GROUND INVASION OF THE NORTH.

DR. ELLSBERG HAS TOLD FRIENDS THAT HE LAST MET WITH DR. KISSINGER IN SEPTEMBER 1970, AT SAN CLEMENTE, CALIF., AT WHICH TIME THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER REFUSED TO TALK ABOUT VIETNAM ISSUES. THE PENTAGON PAPERS WERE PUBLISHED NINE MONTHS LATER.

ONE FORMER HIGH WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL DESCRIBED MR. KISSINGER'S ROLE IN THE INITIAL DELIBERATIONS ON THE PAPERS AS INEVITABLE. "AFTER ALL," THE OFFICIALS SAID, "HENRY WAS THE ONLY INDIVIDUAL ON THE SENIOR STAFF WHO KNEW AND UNDERSTOOD ELLSBERG; HE (MR. KISSINGER) WAS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE PRESIDENT'S CONCERN."

ANOTHER HIGH FORMER AIDE COMMENTED THAT IN THE FIRST DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION OF THE PAPERS "I SAW ELLSBERG THROUGH TWO MEN'S EYES--HENRY AND THE PRESIDENT, WHO UNCLASSIFIED

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HEARD WHAT KISSINGER SAID ABOUT HIM AND KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON (A REFERENCE TO THE PLANNED SECRET CHINA TRIP)."

WITHIN A FEW DAYS AFTER THE PUBLICATION, THE PRESIDENT CONVENED A MEETING OF HIS THREE TOP ADVISERS-- MR. KISSINGER, MR. HALDEMAN, HIS CHIEF OF STAFF, AND MR. EHRLICHMAN.

"HENRY AND NIXON WENT ON AT GREAT LENGTH ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PAPERS AND HENRY WENT ON AND ON ABOUT ELLSBERG," ONE SOURCE SAID.

"HENRY DESCRIBED HOW ELLSBERG HAD CHANGED FROM HAWK TO DOVE, AND--TO GENERALIZE--HE PAINTED A PICTURE

OF A GUY WHO WAS NOT AN IDEOLOGUE BUT COULD HAVE BEEN AN AGENT.

"KISSINGER NEVER USED THAT WORD (AGENT) BUT HE TOLD HOW THEY HAD WORKED TOGETHER OVER THE YEARS AND SAID THAT ONE COULD DEDUCE THAT HIS ACTIONS WERE NOT THE ACTIONS OF AN IDEOLOGUE, BUT OF AN OPPORTUNIST."

THE SOURCE QUOTED MR. KISSINGER AS HAVING TOLD THE PRESIDENT, IN EFFECT "LET ME TELL ABOUT THIS GUY. YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND HIM."

"I CAME OUT OF THERE," THE SOURCE WENT ON, "WITH A REAL SKEPTICISM THAT THE PERSON WHO HAD BEEN DESCRIBED WAS ACTING FROM PURE IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVES. THE PICTURE WAS VERY MURKY AND VERY ALARMING."

THE SOURCE RECALLED THAT MR. KISSINGER SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED DR. ELLSBERG'S KNOWLEDGE OF PLANS FOR TARGETS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THIS INFORMATION WAS DERIVED FROM HIS WORK ON THE SINGLE INTEGRATED OPERATION PLANS AND ON VIETNAM WAR OPTIONS THAT WERE LATER INCORPORATED INTO THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION'S MAIN FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT, NSSM 1 (NATIONAL SECURITY STUDY MEMORANDUM NUMBER 1).

THE FORMER OFFICIAL SAID DR. ELLSBERG WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF SOME OF THE PLANNED MILITARY INITIATIVES FOR THE VIETNAM WAR--INCLUDING THE PROPOSED MINING OF HAIPHONG HARBOR, WHICH TOOK PLACE THE FOLLOWING SPRING. MOST SIGNIFICANTLY, THE SOURCE RECALLED, WAS THE CONCERN OVER DR. ELLSBERG'S KNOWLEDGE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS TARGETING.

THE S.I.O.P. WAS A JOINT SERVICES NUCLEAR TARGETING UNCLASSIFIED

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DOCUMENT THAT HAD BEEN DRAFTED--UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE AIR FORCE'S STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND--IN THE LATE NINETEEN-FIFTIES. THE PLAN COMBINED ALL THE NUCLEAR TARGETING OPTIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL MILITARY SERVICES INTO A COMPUTERIZED PROGRAM WITH CENTRALIZED CONTROL.

IN ESSENCE, QUALIFIED SOURCES SAID, THE S.I.O.P. PROJECT CONTROLS THE TIMING AND ATTACK PATTERNS OF AMERICAN NUCLEAR BOMBS THAT WOULD BE RELEASED FROM ARMY, NAVY, AND AIR FORCE STRATEGIC AIRCRAFT MISSILES AND SUBMARINES. IT ALSO INCLUDES SPECIFIC TARGETING INFORMATION FOR EVERY SIGNIFICANT MILITARY OBJECTIVE INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA, INCLUDING THE NUMBER AND POWER OF NUCLEAR WARHEADS PROGRAMED FOR EACH OBJECTIVE.

- IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION, THE S.I.O.P. WAS DRASTICALLY REVISED AND PROVIDED WITH A LIMITED SERIES OF NUCLEAR OPTIONS, THE SOURCES RECALLED, GIVING THE PRESIDENT AT LEAST THE FLEXIBILITY TO ATTACK EITHER THE SOVIET UNION OR CHINA, AND NOT NECESSARILY BOTH, AS AN EARLIER S.I.O.P. CALLED FOR.

DR. ELLSBERG, THE SOURCES SAID WAS ACTIVE IN WORKING ON THE REVISED NUCLEAR TARGETING PLANS UNDER THEN SECRE-

TARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT S. MCNAMARA.

WELL-INFORMED SOURCES, SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE PLAN HAD BEEN UPDATED AND ALTERED DR. ELLSBERG'S INFORMATION COULD HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY COMPROMISING TO NATIONAL SECURITY.

IN LATE JUNE 1971 SOURCES RECALLED, THE F.B.I. WAS INFORMED BY ITS AGENT INSIDE THE SOVIET APPARATUS IN THE UNITED STATES, THE K.G.B. MAN, THAT A COMPLETE SET OF THE PENTAGON PAPERS HAD BEEN PASSED TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. AT THE TIME, IT WAS BELIEVED THAT DR. ELLSBERG WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING NEWSPAPERS OTHER THAN THE TIMES' WITH MATERIALS FROM THE PENTAGON PAPERS IN WHAT WAS SEEN AS AN EFFORT TO CIRCUMVENT A FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT ORDER FORBIDDING THE TIMES TO CONTINUE PRINTING THE MATERIAL.

THERE WAS IMMEDIATE CONCERN, THE SOURCES RECALLED, THAT DR. ELLSBERG HAD ALSO SUPPLIED THE DOCUMENTS--SAID AT THE TIMES TO INCLUDE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE VOLUMES DEALING WITH DIPLOMATIC ATTEMPTS TO END THE WAR--TO THE SOVIET UNCLASSIFIED

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EMBASSY.

NO ONE QUESTIONED THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE AGENT'S REPORT,THE SOURCES SAID, BECAUSE HE WAS BELIEVED TO BE ONE OF THE IMPORTANT INFORMERS IN THE NATIONAL SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT AND HAD BEEN OPERATING WITH SUCCESS FOR YEARS.

ACTUALLY THE AGENT HAS BEEN THE SOURCE OF HEATED CONTROVERSY INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT SINCE HIS REPORTS WERE FIRST ROUTED TO THE WHITE HOUSE IN THE MIDE-NINETEEN SIXTIES.

"WE'VE BEEN DECEIVED FOR YEARS BY THIS FELLOW," SAID ONE INTELLIGENCE OFFICIAL WITH 30 YEARS EXPERIENCE. "HE'S BEEN A DOUBLE AGENT FOR NEARLY 10 YEARS."

"THIS HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING CASES IN THE HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY" THE SOURCE ADDED. "AND I THINK WE'VE BEEN TAKEN IN BY HIM." THE OFFICIAL ALSO SAID THE SOVIET AGENT HAD BEEN PAID IN CASH BY THE F.B.I. FOR HIS INFORMATION.

INFORMED SOURCES SAID THAT INTENSIVE STUDIES IN

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